

Women's Hockey to Host Playoff Series for First Time Ever

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director

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DULUTH, Minn. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire women's hockey team will host its first-ever playoff series next weekend after defeating the College of St. Scholastica (Minn.) 3-2 at Mars Lakeview Arena today.

The last time an NCHA playoff series has taken place at Hobbs Ice Center was when the Blugold men hosted UW-River Falls in quarterfinal action February 17-18, 1995.

Eau Claire will now take on No. 5-seed Concordia University (Wis.) on Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. If one team wins both games, it will move on to the semifinals. If the two teams split, a minigame will take place immediately after Saturday's game to determine the quarterfinal winner. Tickets are \$8 for adults/UWEC faculty and staff and \$4 for college students/seniors/youths.

The Blugolds captured the Northern Collegiate Hockey Association's No. 4 seed by accumulating 24 points this season with a 10-6-4 conference mark, the most NCHA wins the Blugolds have ever recorded. Concordia also had 24 points, but the Blugolds won the tie breaker by beating and tying the Falcons earlier this month.

Almost all of today's scoring came in the opening period. **Casey McMullen** (So.-Minneapolis, Minn./South) got the Blugolds on the board at 1:39 in the first period and **Kristin Faber** (Sr.-Austin, Minn.) scored less than three minutes later to give the Blugolds a two-goal lead.

St. Scholastica quickly answered, scoring just over two minutes later but the Blugolds took a two-goal lead again after **Christine Dickinson** (Sr.-Layton, Utah/Shattuck-St. Mary's) scored at 14:17 in the initial period.

Through the second period, the teams remained tied, but the Saints got back in the game with a goal at 7:39 in the final period. The Blugolds were able to hold on for the win though.

Eau Claire finished outshooting the Saints 22-10 and **Mara Stormer** (So.-Waunakee, Wis.) played the entire game at goalie, stopping eight shots.

The Saints, in their inaugural season, didn't make the playoffs so they end with an overall mark of 7-16-2 and a conference record of 5-13-2.